



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
MARINE CORPS EDUCATION COMMAND
MARINE CORPS UNIVERSITY
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MARINE CORPS UNIVERSITY POLICY LETTER 3-03

From: President, Marine Corps University/Commanding General,
Education Command
To: Distribution List

Subj: MARINE CORPS UNIVERSITY (MCU) PLAGIARISM POLICY

1. Purpose. To provide MCU guidance for instances of plagiarism or suspected plagiarism.
2. Cancellation. MCU Policy Letter 2-02, dated 20 March 2002.
3. Background

a. Plagiarism is generally defined as the presentation of another's writing or another's ideas as one's own without appropriate citation or credit. It is a serious violation of ethics and scholarship and constitutes serious misconduct for a military member or government employee. Detection can therefore result not only in academic sanctions (e.g. dismissal from a program, adverse fitness report, denial of promotion, etc.) but also civil action and, under certain circumstances, criminal prosecution.

b. The misuse of writings of another author, even when one does not borrow exact wording, can be as unfair, as unethical, and as unprofessional as outright plagiarism. Such misuse includes the limited borrowing, without attribution, of another writer's distinctive and significant research findings, hypotheses, theories, rhetorical strategies, interpretations, as well as an "extended" borrowing even with attribution. Simply because material may exist in the public domain does not mean it can be used in an academic setting without proper citation.

4. Forms of Plagiarism

a. The most common forms of plagiarism are:

(1) Appropriation of either whole papers or merely exact phrasing from another source, without quotation marks or footnote attribution.

Subj: MARINE CORPS UNIVERSITY (MCU) PLAGIARISM POLICY

(2) The presentation of other writers' unique ideas, which derive from previously published works but which are not acknowledged as derivative from those sources.

b. The clearest abuse is the presentation of another writer's work as one's own, or use of another's language without quotation marks and note citation. More subtle abuses include the appropriation of concepts, data, or notes, all disguised in newly crafted sentences, or reference to a borrowed work in an early note and coupled with extensive further use without attribution. Plagiarism also includes improper use of material extracted from the Internet, other electronic sources, and verbatim passages used in oral presentations without proper acknowledgment. All such tactics reflect an unworthy disregard for the contribution of others.

c. A less frequent, but equally unethical, form of plagiarism is submission of the same paper as original work to satisfy the requirements of more than one course.

d. The best defense against possible plagiarism is thorough documentation of the work. All MCU students will familiarize themselves with individual school or college policies as contained in the school's respective Standard Operating Procedures and the recommended style manuals that contain detailed examples of proper citation.

5. Policy. The following policies regarding plagiarism will be followed at MCU:

a. All University faculty, staff, and students must be vigilant against plagiarism violations and immediately report instances to their respective school or college leadership.

b. Student works will consist primarily of the student's own thoughts and words, expressed in his/her own phrasing.

c. When a writer uses ideas or wording that are not his or her own but presents them as if they were, he or she has committed plagiarism.

d. Instructors or faculty who believe they have detected plagiarism will request the convening of a Student Performance Evaluation Board (SPEB). If the Board determines that a student has committed plagiarism, that military member or government employee is liable to punitive action pursuant to the SPEB policy.

Subj: MARINE CORPS UNIVERSITY (MCU) PLAGIARISM POLICY

6. Applicability. This policy applies to all personnel of Marine Corps University.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'T. A. Benes', is positioned above the printed name.

T. A. BENES

Distribution: A